

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 3-7, 9-11, 14-17, and 19-22 were withdrawn as the result of an Election Requirement. Claims 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, and 18 were rejected. By entry of this amendment, claims 1 and 12 have been amended, withdrawn claims 5-7, 9, 15-17, 19, and 22 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 23-31 have been added. Consequently, claims 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 18, and 23-31 are pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

Rejections under 35 USC § 102, 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 12, and 13 were rejected as being unpatentable over any one of Cooke (GB Pat. No. 1,011,329), Collister (US Pat. No. 5,507,611), and Peterson (US Pat. No. 2,224,522). Claims 8 and 18 were rejected as being unpatentable over any one of Cooke, Collister, and Peterson in view of Yang (US Pat. No. 5,865,559) or Homan (US Pat. No. 6,193,260).

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, is not anticipated by, or obvious in view of, any of the above cited references, as features of the claim are not shown or suggested in the cited references. For example, amended claim 1 recites a locking member located at a first end of a shaft member and including a cylindrical end portion, wherein a central axis of the cylindrical end portion is generally coaxial to the shaft member when the locking member is in a first position and generally perpendicular to the shaft member when the locking member is in a second position. None of the cited references disclose or suggest the use of a locking member having a cylindrical end portion that is coaxial with a shaft member in any position. As such, claim 1 is patentable over the cited references and is in condition for allowance. Original claims 2 and 8 and new claim 23 are also patentable over the cited references at least based on direct dependence on claim 1 and are in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 12, as amended, is not anticipated by, or obvious in view of, any of the above cited references, as features of the claim are not shown or suggested in the cited references. For example, amended claim 12 recites an integrated pin and clip with a shaft member that includes at least one cut-out portion on an outer surface sized to

receive a locking member in seating engagement and retain the locking member in a position that does not allow for insertion or removal. None of the cited references disclose or suggest a shaft with a cut-out portion in which a locking member is received in seating engagement. As such, claim 12 is patentable over the cited references and is in condition for allowance. Original claims 13 and 18 and new claims 24-26 are also patentable over the cited references at least based on direct dependence on claim 12 and are in condition for allowance.

New claim 27 is also patentable over the above cited references, as features of the claim are not shown or suggested in the cited references. For example, claim 27 recites an integrated pin and clip with a locking member located at a first end of a shaft member, wherein the locking member is movable to a position in which the locking member extends laterally from only one side of the shaft member. None of the cited references disclose or suggest a locking member that can be positioned to extend laterally from only one side of a shaft member. As such, new claim 27 is patentable over the cited references and is in condition for allowance. New claims 28-31 are also patentable over the cited references at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 27 and are in condition for allowance.

In summary, independent claims 1, 12 and 27 are believed to be allowable. Further, the remaining pending dependent claims are allowable at least based on direct or indirect dependence from the corresponding allowable independent claims.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: October 23, 2006